

A Mini Dissection of CBL

(original page located at <https://forum.bodybuilding.com/showthread.php?t=149292883>)

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CBL has been growing a lot, especially in powerlifting circles, due to the immense success of some very popular individuals (e.g., Vincent Dizenzo, Brian Carroll). Individuals report fast fat loss, excellent increases in strength, and maintenance or improvement in muscle mass. Sounds pretty awesome and this is not to dismiss their hard work. Furthermore, this isn't to say that CBL does or doesn't work but instead point out the inconsistencies that lie within to help potential dieters make a choice.

As a note, I am not a scientist. Instead, I have something called a brain and I'm able to make obvious connections that call things into question. Since no one has really done this (since the number of references are absolutely absurd), I've taken a handful of studies and quotes referenced by Kiefer in CBL that really question the concept.

If you do follow the diet then, from my own research, I'd go with a very simplistic approach and not worry about the asininity of some of the procedures (e.g., an insane focus on high-GI carbs, to the point that he recommends pasta or vegetables should be omitted during a backload). In the end, you should do what you feel works best without over complicating your life. Or, as AA says it, "How about cutting through the bullsh!t & ceasing to believe that a folklore-based protocol is worth the effort to begin with??? FFS, if you like carbs at night, have them without thinking you need to avoid or minimize them in the day. If you like carbs in the day, have them without thinking you need to avoid or minimize them at night. That's a hell of a lot easier, more flexible, & just as effective."

What is CBL?

A quick breakdown of what it is (this is loose since there are variations, so please spare me any part where you say I'm wrong):

- (1) Skip breakfast (Optional) but shift calories to later in the day
- (2) Eat under 30g of carbs before training is done and these have to be from vegetables, dairy and nuts but no grains and fruits. This is where you get your fibre and micros. You can't have all 30g at once but it has to be spread out.
- (3) After workout, take in protein and very high-GI carbs.
- (4) After this, you consume a bunch of high-GI carbs such as (Kiefer's favourite) cherry turnovers. You also consume protein such as a whole chicken.
- (5) Ideal time of training is around 5PM. Carbs are always eaten after training UNLESS your train in morning.

Simple. That's the cliff version. There are other nuances, the most important being specific types of carbs being allowed at specific times. The essence is simple. It's a trademarked term

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called "Modulated Tissue Response." ****ty terms aside, losing fat and gaining muscle through "daily biological rhythms, bio- molecular manipulation and, unlike most diet protocols, a specific window of time in which training should occur." Laymen terms: eat at certain times, eat certain things and you're golden, pony boy.

(A) Van Loon LJ (2007) – “Application of protein or protein hydrolysates to improve postexercise recovery.” – Chapter 37, reference #1

One of the reasons Kiefer recommends incredibly high GI carbs post-workout (e.g., his infamous brown-spotted bananas) is not for glycogen restoration but a maximization of muscle protein synthesis (MPS). The problem here is that the above study he cited makes this conclusion:

"Carbohydrate ingestion after resistance-type exercise does not seem to be warranted to further stimulate muscle protein synthesis or improve whole-body protein balance when ample protein has already been ingested."

This study was used to reference this: "All three [hydrolysates, leucine, and high-GI carbs] together act synergistically to produce a massive increase in MPS." How can he reference a study that supports hydrolysates but that same study dismisses carbohydrates post-workout?

(B) Heavy use of Koopman R.

Koopman et al. (2007) published a study called "Coingestion of carbohydrate with protein does not further augment postexercise muscle protein synthesis." Kiefer never mentions this yet cites Koopman's studies (Chapter 37, reference #1) that conclude a coingestion of carbohydrates and protein improves MPS but these all pre-date the study I mentioned. If he's citing Koopman constantly, how did he miss this study? This isn't to say that carbohydrates post-workout do not matter but rather that Koopman's most recent conclusions should matter to Kiefer. Instead, it seems that he's being selective.

(C) Keim et al. (1997) - "Weight loss is greater with consumption of large morning meals and fat-free mass is preserved with large evening meals in women on a controlled weight reduction regimen." Chapter 14, reference #16 and Chapter 15, reference #1

Kiefer notes that one of the major benefits of CBL is the improved fat loss (plus increase in muscle tissue because of MTR) of his diet. This study, though, notes minimal differences in weight loss between the AM and PM group but the PM group had better muscle preservation (0.25kg LBM [PM] loss vs. 1.28kg [AM] while BF% reduction was 2.55% vs. 1.83%, respectively). If there really is such notable fat loss enhancement (as well as "Muscle Tissue Response") from CBL, why did Keim's study not reproduce this (he'd probably say the protocol was vastly different than CBL)? Despite this, Kiefer cites Keim anyways, which seems to underscore the lavish claims Kiefer makes.

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(D) Sofer et al. (2011) – “Greater weight loss and hormonal changes after 6 months diet with carbohydrates eaten mostly at dinner.” – Chapter 34, reference #2

You might recognize this study as it has been used by Layne Norton to dismiss carbs at night making you fat and used by Borge (aka Blade) to support his biorhythm diet. Where Kiefer and Borge fall short is that this study's methodology is a mess. Alan Aragon's take on this study:

Originally Posted by **Alan Aragon**

- Method of body composition assessment was not specified (not kidding).
- No tracking of dietary intake - let alone software analysis - was mentioned in the text.
- No structured exercise program was in place, neither was tracking or control of physical activity.
- Obese cops are not the most trustworthy population for self-reported intake (couldn't help that).
- Relevance of this study to the majority of the population interested in CBL is close to zip.

Every study within the body of evidence on any topic can be considered a puzzle piece. Some puzzle pieces fit in nice & snug, others, not so much. Is this bit of evidence interesting? Yes. Is it relevant or applicable to us? Not necessarily. Also consider that unreplicated results are always subject to one-hit wonder status. I wouldn't dismiss any study outright, but at the same time, I wouldn't put any single (unreplicated) study up on a special perch, either.

Originally Posted by **Alan Aragon**

Just looked at the diet prescribed by Sofer et al....

20% protein, 30–35% fat, 45–50% carbohydrates, 1,300–1,500 kcal. How many CBL fans are consuming 65-75 g protein per day?

Layne Norton mentions that Kiefer overextends the nighttime carbs data.

(E) "By including fiber, up to 20 percent of calories from a meal get lost" - Page 31

I recognize that he says "up to 20 percent" but if we quickly look at three of the studies:

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(1) The metabolizable energy of diets differing in dietary fat and fiber measured in humans. - Concludes that Low Fibre, High Fat diet is 94.3% digestible and High Fibre, Low Fat diet is 91.4% digestible. *2.9% extra calories are lost*

(2) Effect of dietary fiber on the metabolizable energy of human diets. - Low Fibre diet is 92.1% digestible and High Fibre is 88.7% digestible. *3.4% extra calories are lost*

(3) Metabolizable energy of diets low or high in dietary fiber from fruits and vegetables when consumed by humans. - Low Fibre diet is 89.7% digestible while High Fibre is 84.6% digestible. *5.1% extra calories are lost*

If he means 20% off of 100% then that's still misleading. The low fibre diets still lost a considerable amount of calories and, in comparison to the high fibre, it didn't fair that much worse.

(F) "I happened upon a paper that tested insulin sensitivity and glucose clearance in type II diabetics after resistance training" - Page 41

This one is particularly interesting only because he mentions resistance training specifically. In the full-text (study is called "Exercise training increases glycogen synthase activity and GLUT4 expression but not insulin signaling in overweight nondiabetic and type 2 diabetic subjects"), though, the researchers note that "At least 1 week after the euglycemic, hyperinsulinemic clamp, the subjects began an 8-week **aerobic** exercise training program" (page 1234).

Kiefer says resistance but study says aerobic.

That's It

That's all I really cared to do because anyone who tries to fully dissect this mammoth will be bogged down for ages. There seems to be some inconsistencies between Kiefer and his own citations, which calls into question the validity of CBL. Whether CBL really works or not is up in the air but his extravagant claims aren't supported by his citations.